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THE ART AMATEUR MONTHLY JOURNAL

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PICTURES IN THE MUNICH EXHIBITION OF 1883.

1. "UNDER THE ARENA." BY CARL VON PILOTY. 2. "THE MANDOLIN PLAYER." BY AUGUST HOLMBERG. 3. "PORTRAIT." BY F. A. KAULBACH. 4. "SORROW." BY CONRAD KIESEL. 5. "OLIVER CROMWELL VISITING JOHN MILTON." BY DAVID NEAL. 6. "HAGAR AND ISHMAEL." BY E. K. LISKA.

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FRENCH PICTURE COUNTERFEITERS.

GREAT commotion has been created among the Parisian picture dealers and picture buyers by the so-called Corot-Trouillebert incident. Some three years ago, M. Alexandre Dumas the younger, the famous dramatist, the illustrious member of the French Academy, one of the members of the Superior Council of Fine Arts, and a notable connoisseur and collector of pictures, bought of the dealer, Georges Petit, for the sum of twelve thousand francs, a picture entitled the "Source de Gabouret," and signed in all five letters—Corot. For three years this Corot was the admiration of all M. Dumas's illustrious friends. The finest Corot in Paris was the Corot of M. Dumas, the finest and surest of connoisseurs. However, some ten weeks ago, some one pointed out to M. Dumas that his Corot was not a Corot, and offered to bring the real author of the painting. The next day this person brought M. Trouillebert, who immediately recognized his work. Thereupon M. Dumas, who had for three years believed this picture to be a Corot, who had bought it with all the circumspection of an enlightened connoisseur, and who had pointed out to his illustrious friends all the beauties and details of the work, time after time, became convinced that he had been deceived, and braving the ridicule into which his pretensions as an enlightened connoisseur must fall, he made the affair public, and requested M. Petit to reimburse the twelve thousand francs. After some delay M. Petit complied, and M. Dumas wrote him out a receipt of the twelve thousand francs "in payment of a false Corot."

Evidently for a dealer of the position of M. Georges Petit, it was a very serious matter to have sold a false Corot, for besides being a dealer, M. Petit is one of the leading Parisian picture experts. Now, did M. Petit knowingly sell his picture as a false Corot? The question is delicate. We will only say that among the dealers a story circulates to the effect that one of their craft pointed out to M. Petit the falsity of the work, and called his attention to an erasure on the painting where the original signature had been rubbed out. To this M. Petit is stated to have replied: "No matter; the picture is now going into a collection from which it will come out genuine." The collection in question was that of M. Dumas.

No sooner did this incident become public, than M. Petit endeavored to throw the responsibility off his own shoulders, and wrote to the papers, saying that he had bought the picture of Tedesco Brothers, of the Avenue de l'Opéra, and considering their relations, and especially the relations of their father with Corot, he had taken the picture in all confidence, and sold it likewise. M. Petit declared afterward, orally, that MM. Tedesco had assured him that they had the picture direct from Corot. Accordingly, M. Petit returned the false Corot to MM. Tedesco, who reimbursed the price paid. To justify themselves in turn, MM. Tedesco wrote to the papers to say that they had bought the picture of a M. Cordeil, who in his turn wrote to say that as a restorer of old pictures he professed to have no competency to judge modern ones; that the picture in question was intrusted to him in 1880 by a M. de Beum; that he spoke about it to a M. Kiewert, who brought the brothers Tedesco; that the brothers Tedesco bought the picture for four thousand francs, and he, Cordeil, and Kiewert received each a commission of two hundred francs. Now, in all this story, where is the forger, if forger there be? Where is the man who erased the signature of Trouillebert, and counterfeited that of Corot? Perhaps it would not be in the interests of the majority of the Parisian picture dealers to let that cat out of the bag. Few of them would escape without getting their faces scratched.

Well, here we find M. Dumas, one of the notable connoisseurs of Paris, imitating the vulgarest parvenu, and buying a picture simply because it was signed with the five letters—Corot. Evidently, M. Dumas did not buy the picture purely on its merits, otherwise why should he have turned it out of his collection as soon as he found out who its real author was? Then, again, we have M. Petit, one of the first experts of Paris, who sells the Trouillebert as a Corot. If M. Petit was sincere, his case is not without excuse; even the first expert of Paris can make a mistake, which only proves that picture experts in general are not infallible.

Some years ago the Messrs. Sichel had in their possession a little Corot painted on copper. The picture was genuine, and the person for whom the Sichels were trying to sell it had it direct from Corot, who indeed painted it in his presence on a sheet of copper, for the simple reason that neither a canvas nor a panel was to be had in the place where he was working. The Goupils and several other dealers saw the picture, and pronounced it to be false, because it was painted on copper, and "Corot never painted on copper." Again, there is a general distrust among dealers of Corots painted on panels, because Corot nearly always painted on canvas, and yet there are Corots painted on panels. So uncertain a science is that of an expert in pictures! So, then, we will try to excuse M. Petit, but we can only laugh at that fine connoisseur, M. Alexandre Dumas, member of the Superior Council of Fine Arts, who for three years imagined that he had the finest Corot in Paris, when, after all, that Corot was nothing but a Trouillebert!

Now, who is Trouillebert? Trouillebert is a man of some forty-five years of age, who lives at No. 20 Rue Navarin, and does not make a pile of money. For years past his figure subjects have been invariably received at the Salon, and his landscapes just as invariably refused. Why? Probably because the jury regarded them as being too evidently copies of Corot. As this incident is the talk of Paris, a dealer in the Rue Laffitte has exhibited in one of his windows a real Corot, and in the other a Trouillebert. This Trouillebert is a copy, with very slight variations, of a Corot now in a private collection of Paris. And the plain fact is that Trouillebert paints Corots admirably; he was more or less a pupil of the master, and he has caught above all things Corot's trick of enveloping his trees in a silvery haze, and leaving the drawing undecided and fluffy. Last year Trouillebert sold some forty of his landscapes at the Hôtel Drouot, and the lot produced fifteen thousand francs. How many of these pictures will find their way to America as authentic Corots? As regards M. Trouillebert, whose name has been brought into prominence by this incident, he has simply been proved to be an excellent imitator of Corot, but it must be said to his credit that he has never sought to draw profit from his peculiar talent. This "Source de Gabouret," for instance, was sold by him seven or eight years ago to M. Voisinot, the colorman of the Rue Notre Dame de Lorette, for three hundred francs. M. Voisinot kept it in his window, signed Trouillebert, for two years, and then sold it for four hundred francs to a certain M. Rose. While passing from the hands of M. Rose to those of MM. Tedesco, the signature of Trouillebert disappeared, and that of Corot took its place. And so the Tedescos paid four thousand francs for the picture, and sold it to M. Petit for nine thousand francs, and he sold it to M. Dumas for twelve thousand francs. At the present moment the picture is in the hands of MM. Tedesco, who probably cannot find the person of whom they bought it through the intermediary of Cordeil. We hear, however, that the person in question is insolvent, and that MM. Tedesco prefer the possession even of a Trouillebert to nothing at all. Furthermore, strange to say, MM. Tedesco affirm, in spite of the declarations of M. Trouillebert, that the picture in question is really a Corot. And to end up the story, M. Trouillebert has filed a petition in court to have the picture sequestered until three experts have pronounced the picture to be really his and not Corot's, and to request authorization to re-establish his signature before the work is again sold.

The public exposure of this case will probably do great harm to the Parisian picture dealers, and it cannot be said that they do not deserve their fate. They are frankly a sad set of rogues, with a very few exceptions, indeed. Their speculations in pictures are just as tricky as speculations in stocks. They get up corners, they run up prices, they let each other in and they let the public in with a bare-facedness that is simply astounding. But one or two incidents like this Corot-Trouillebert will perhaps put the public on its guard. It will certainly disincite amateurs to purchase the works of the masters of the past forty years, or, at any rate, it will discourage people who buy pictures from fashion and simply for the signature—a very numerous class in these days of vanity. It cannot be too widely published, for the benefit of this class, that more than half the pictures and studies signed Fromentin are by Paul Delamain, an artist

who studied Algeria before Fromentin, and whose sketches and studies were bought up at his death and prepared by the dealers. Numbers of pictures signed Jules Dupré are by Victor Dupré, only the dealers have tricked the signature. Of pictures by Diaz there is a well-known manufactory in the Rue Bonaparte, and the dealers manipulate largely the signature of Richet, the natural son of Diaz, who has thoroughly caught the trick of his father's painting. Vernon, too, who is the real author of some of the masterpieces signed Hobbema, has frequently been manipulated by the dealers, and Longuet has painted scores of works to which the signature of Diaz or of Rousseau has been affixed. Quantities of sketches and studies sold as by Theodore Rousseau are by Kreyder, the flower-painter, who worked for a long time in Rousseau's studio at Barbizon, and who left a heap of his canvases there when he came back to Paris. At the Rousseau sale Kreyder was astonished to find his studies sold as those of Rousseau. Kreyder did not protest, for he had nothing to gain, and the mistake amuses him. As for Courbets, everybody knows whence many and many a Courbet comes. Toward the end of his life Courbet, being obliged to produce a great deal and rapidly, divulged the secrets of his palette to some of his pupils. Among his most devoted collaborators was C. Pata, who accompanied him in his exile to La Tour de Peilz, and acquired thoroughly the thick color, the brutality and the knife tricks of the master of Ornans. Now, C. Pata is quite a remarkable painter, and, like Trouillebert, he sells his pictures as his own, only the dealers insist in changing the Patas into Courbets. At Rome and Naples the forgers devote themselves especially to counterfeiting the work of the living painters, such as Detaille, Meissonier, and De Nittis. For instance, of the picture of the Place des Pyramides, by De Nittis, recently bought by the French government for the Luxembourg Museum, there exist to the artist's certain knowledge no less than eight forgeries. At Geneva, too, there is a considerable manufactory of false Courbets, Corots, Rousseaus, and Daubignys, and we fear that a thorough examination of American picture collections would reveal the sad fact that most of these ingenious forgeries have found hanging room and honor in the country of dollars, "le pays des dollars," as the French call it. In the matter of old masters, everybody knows how difficult the expert's task is, and after all how little it is worth. Gherardi copied Giulio Romano; Buonvicino made portraits that were mistaken for the work of Titian; Ercolino del Castel was the Sosie of his master, Guido Reni; Murillo during his lifetime had a swarm of counterfeiters at Seville. The moral of all this is, do not buy pictures for the sake of the signature, and do not place unlimited confidence in the opinion of experts. Perhaps the wisest plan for the latter to adopt would be that of the expert, La Neuville, who, when charged with the Casimir-Perier sale in 1825, put this preface to his catalogue: "For this catalogue we shall not indulge in any of those old and useless eulogiums that have so often been abused. Connoisseurs and amateurs form neither their judgment nor their taste according to the opinion that it is sought to impose upon them. We shall content ourselves with stating that this sale is composed of good and fine pictures, and we shall respect the attributions of the amateur." By this preface the expert entirely covered himself. It was simple, prudent, short, energetic, and effective.

CHICAGO'S OPPORTUNITY.

IN response to the inquiry of M. Bartholdi in THE ART AMATEUR, as to whether it was likely that the city of Chicago would give to the Statue of Liberty Pedestal Fund the \$30,000 received from the French artists in aid of the sufferers by the great fire, but never applied to that purpose and never accounted for, The Chicago Inter-Ocean of July 24th says:

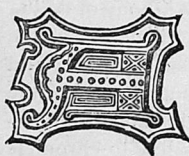
"Mr. Henry W. King, who was Chairman of the Chicago Relief and Aid Society at the time of the fire, stated yesterday that the French money had been received in this city through Governor Morgan, of New York. After the money reached Governor Morgan, M. Bartholdi made a move to have the money diverted from the original idea, and have it contributed toward the construction of the Statue of Liberty. The principal donors of the money would not consent to M. Bartholdi's idea, and Governor Morgan, after holding the money several years as a trustee, for-

warded it in accordance with the request of the Chicago Aid Society, and the money was disbursed with the general fund."

It is entirely erroneous to say that "the principal donors of the money would not consent to M. Bartholdi's idea." On the contrary, with the exception of Meissonier and two or three who had died in the interim, all the contributors to the fund signed a petition that it might be applied to the cost of producing the statue of Liberty. M. Bartholdi had this document photographed, on account of its containing the autographs of nearly every artist of reputation in France. He has sent a copy of it to the editor of THE ART AMATEUR, who will be happy to show it to any one who may desire to see it.

Now that the press and people of Chicago are made aware of the real facts of the case, we doubt not that a public spirit will be developed which will quickly induce the city authorities to apply the amount of this fund in accordance with the clearly expressed wish of the givers. Its application to common municipal uses, though a questionable procedure at best, may possibly be excused on the ground that the donors' wishes were misunderstood at the time, but as the case stands at present the further retention of the money would be unpardonable. There are, we fear, municipalities in the United States that would be incapable of honorable conduct in a case like this, but in Chicago we are confident that a generous patriotism will override all baser motives, and give the artists of France the gratification of knowing that their noble gift has been rescued from the streets and sewers and applied at last to a worthy international object.

My Note Book.



THE recent exhibition in the gallery of the Rue de Sèze, Paris—an exhibition somewhat ambitiously termed by its organizer, the dealer, M. Georges Petit, "Exposition du Cent Chef-d'œuvres"—there was a picture of the "Fair of Saint Germain's" by Garbet. The catalogue speaks of this Garbet as a mysterious personage who had only painted four pictures in his life, and about whom information was sadly wanting. The Paris press took the matter up and made Garbet's picture one of the curiosities of the show, and crowds were gathered round it daily in spite of the attractions of Rembrandt, Franz Hals, Rousseau, Delacroix, Meissonier, Troyon, Corot, and Daubigny.

* * *

Now it just happens that information about Garbet is not entirely wanting, and in case some ingenious dealer tries to get up a Garbet craze it may be as well to state that under the reign of Louis Philippe, Félix Emile Garbet was employed at the prefecture of the Seine. He used to spend his Sundays painting. From 1831 to 1837 he exhibited regularly at the Salon, as may be seen from the catalogue, and the "Fair of St. Germain's," exhibited in the Rue de Sèze, is precisely the picture exhibited in 1837. Garbet did not have much success; he became discouraged, and did not exhibit again until 1846, when the critic Thoré (Burger) spoke of his picture of the carnival as a mosaic painting. After that date we hear nothing about Garbet. To judge from the picture about which the Parisians have been talking so much, Garbet had qualities of artlessness, candor, and sincerity; he certainly had great talent for a modest functionary, and yet not enough to merit the posthumous celebrity that certain perhaps interested persons wish to make for him.

* * *

SOME interesting facts as to the value of paintings by French artists a generation or so ago may be culled from that rare pamphlet, "Le Bulletin de l'Alliance des Arts," published in 1845 under the direction of Monsieur Paul Lacroix. The pictures of Meissonier even in those days brought the highest prices. His "Corps de Garde," his "Partie de Piquet," and his "Jeune Homme regardant ses Dessins" were valued at the (then) large sum of 3000 francs (\$600) each. At the Hotel Bullion, a picture by Herrera the elder, worthy of a museum, sold for 3 francs 15 sous. A country scene, by Jules Andre; only brought the artist 300 francs. Baron sold his

"Oies du Frère Philippe" for 500 francs. H. Belanger was envied for getting as high as \$200 and even \$300 for his subjects. M. Belloc got \$160 for a portrait. Court got \$600. Benouville, the painter of classic scenery, only got a few hundred francs for his works, and landscapes with animals, by Rosa Bonheur, fetched \$25 and \$30. Brascassat got \$200, \$400, and \$600. His "Cow Attacked by Wolves" was valued at between \$1200 and \$1400, and "infatuation" was the word used as a reason for such a sum. Calame had also his admirers. A Russian bought his "Orage" (Storm) for \$1400. Compté Calix sold his pictures for \$60 and \$80. Corot sometimes found it difficult to get \$100 for a large canvas. The admirable paintings of Eugène Delacroix, his "Marcus Aurelius" even, did not find purchasers, and at that time Delacroix sold pictures for \$100 worth \$20,000. Diaz only asked \$200 for a portrait, \$60 for a landscape; and Hippolyte Flandrin, \$600, sometimes \$200, for a portrait. The landscapes of Français sold for \$40, and \$60 was a good price for Guillemin's Breton subjects. Paul Huet's great subjects sold for \$200; a fine landscape by Troyon for \$160, and the "Auto da Fé" of Robert Fleury for \$400.

* * *

ONE of the most popular pictures in the Royal Academy exhibition this year was R. W. Macbeth's "A Sacrifice." It represents a fashionable hairdressing saloon of the last century, in which the master is cutting from the head of an impoverished gentlewoman her superb auburn tresses and handing them to an attendant. I heard an interesting anecdote in connection with this canvas which might give the idea of a subject for a future Academy picture. Sir Frederick Leighton came into Macbeth's studio just as the work was receiving the final touches. Millais and Boughton were also there. Leighton, remarking that one arm of the hairdresser was not well modelled, put his own arm in the same position, and resting it on Boughton's shoulder, with characteristic good nature called out, "Now fire away, Macbeth, I'll be your model." He stood thus for half an hour, and the result was a decided improvement. Millais then took up a brush, added a few touches, the picture was declared completed, and the friends had a hearty laugh over their collaboration.

* * *

ACCORDING to a Rochester (N. Y.), lady correspondent of The San Francisco Chronicle, the former city boasts of a tall, slender young man with wonderfully fitting garments and straw-colored hair who "sells bits of china to art-stricken women in a manner quite irresistible." No Rochester woman, we are told, thinks her house fit to live in until the young man has cast his approving glance over her household gods and put a vase in some impossible corner, or placed the clock where no living mortal would ever think of looking for it. The reader is invited to imagine "an æsthetic parrot, with a choice sample of china in his claw, one eye closed, while, with head on one side, he gazes knowingly on the scrap of china with the other eye, and discourses wisely about its merits. His eyes grow dark or pale according to his interest in and the pathos of his theme; a long and sharp Roman nose droops like a parrot's beak over a delicate and sensitive mouth, as gracefully curved as a Cupid's bow. Dazzling white teeth finish up the conquest. Having ended his elegant remarks, he pauses with a languid air, and allows his ruby lips to close in a benevolent and condescending smile, and the unfortunate woman suddenly wakes to the consciousness that she is gazing into the violet eyes, rather than on the tea cup entwined with lavender roses held up by his slender white hand."

* * *

THAT excellent comedian and genial companion, Henry Edwards, has given the public an unlooked-for pleasure in a little volume of sketches he calls "A Mingled Yarn," published by G. P. Putnam's Sons. Charmingly written throughout, it will perhaps be found especially interesting to artists, by reason of Mr. Edwards's delightful narrative of his "Three Weeks in Mazatlan," a queer old Mexican town on the Pacific coast, about which one would like to know more: "The men wear the serape or blanket, generally of brilliant colors, and extremely picturesque and orna-

mental. The women when young are remarkably pretty; their dark and speaking eyes, long eyelashes, and usually white teeth, lighting up faces of strong expression; while their black hair, always well-combed and glossy, with their graceful and well-shaped forms, moulded in all the luxuriance of a tropical climate, combine to make them abundantly attractive to a stranger's eye." But they fade early, at about thirty years losing all traces of their former beauty. "The dresses of the younger women are usually of very pretty patterns, the product of French looms, and hang gracefully over their well-moulded forms; their walk, like that of all people free from the trammels and restraints of fashion, being free, erect and firm. A white chemise, not always concealing the upper part of the body, and a black or gray 'rebosa' complete their costume; the ever-present cigarette, and the tobacco stains upon their lips and fingers, giving evidence of their love for the soothing weed."

* * *

JOHN S. SARGENT is, or was, the favorite pupil of Carolus Duran. The accomplished Frenchman used to be very proud of him. But if our Sargent continues, as he is doing, to win from the critics abundant praise, while his master receives nothing but blame—well, I'm afraid "he'll get himself disliked." Here is a sample criticism from The Saturday Review, apropos of the work of both gentlemen in this year's Salon: "Mr. Sargent's 'Portraits d'enfants' is a delightful picture, full of freshness and life—the children are playing in a large room; anything more happily unlike the 'official' portraits of the day cannot be imagined. Here there is no 'posing' of the figures, no straining after the violent contrasts of light and shade which are only obtainable in a studio, and which are never seen in the surroundings in which most people live. M. Carolus Duran's work is, if possible, more vulgar than usual this year. His portrait of 'Mme. H.' is hideous in color and offensively inaccurate in drawing, while his 'Vision,' which shows us an ugly little temptress screening a crucifix from the sight of a lop-sided old saint in the midst of an impossible landscape, is hardly worth speaking of."

* * *

PRINT collectors may be interested in the following quotation of prices brought for some well-known works, at a recent sale at Christie's: "The Madonna di San Sisto," after Raphael, by C. F. Muller, £80; "The Transfiguration," after Raphael, by R. Morghen, £80; "The Last Supper," after Da Vinci, by R. Morghen, £178. At the same sale Turner's "Views in England and Wales," with descriptions by E. H. Lloyd, 2 vols., largest paper, brought £115.

* * *

THE largest price ever given for an etching was paid by M. Dutuit at the recent sale at Sotheby's of the Rev. J. Griffith's collection of prints, when, through the agency of M. Clément, he bought for £1510 the first state of "The Advocate Tolling," by Rembrandt. Hitherto, it has been supposed that the most expensive print in the world was the first state of the famous "Hundred Guilder." M. Dutuit is also the owner of this prize, the price he paid for it being £1130.

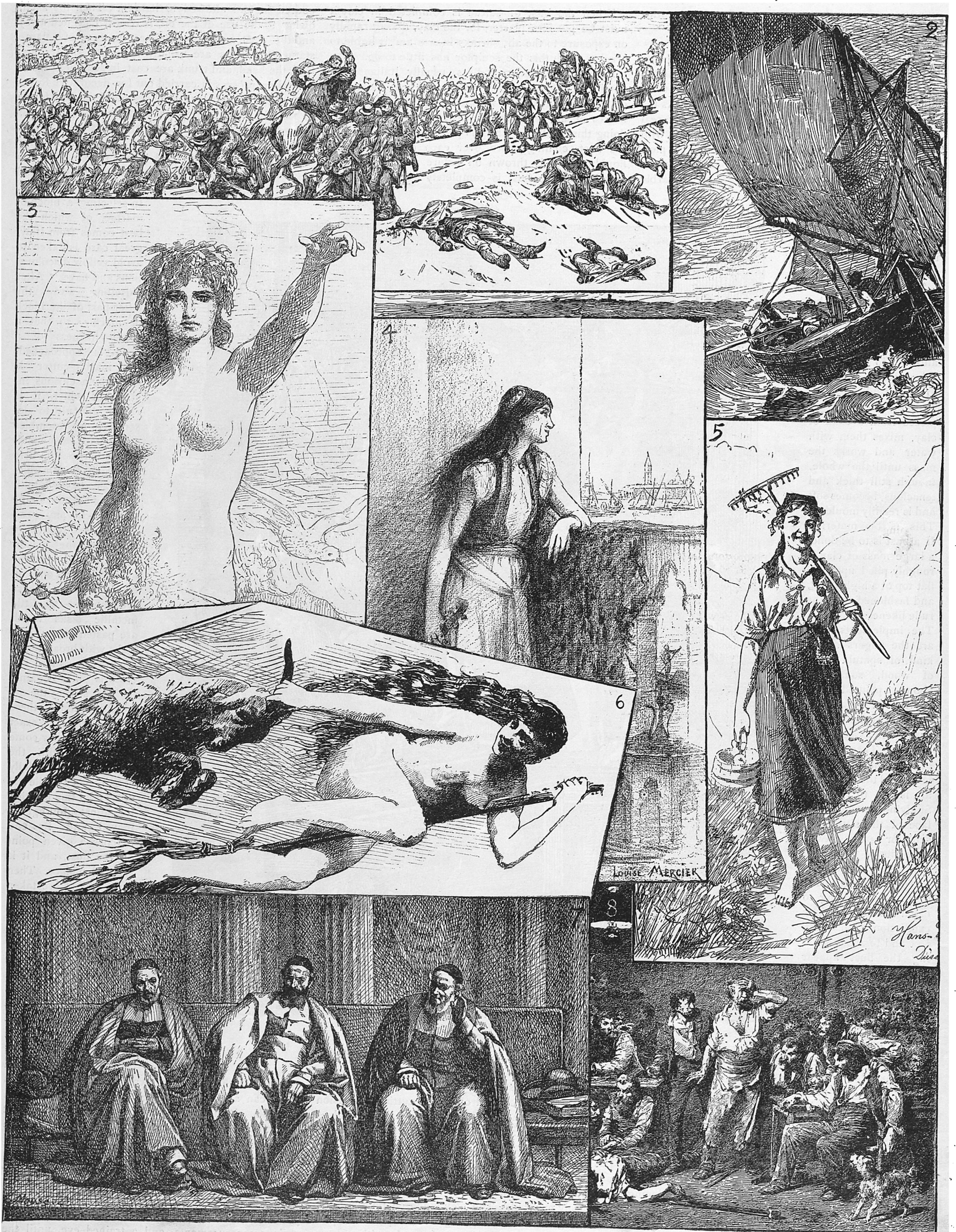
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IN these days of cheap photography when the portrait of every one is taken, ranging from emperors to the celebrities of the "Rogues' Gallery," it is strange to learn that no authentic portrait of Fielding is in existence. A recent paragraph in The Athenæum stated that a bust of "the father of the English novel," to serve as a memorial in his native town of Somerset had been modelled from "the celebrated drawing by Hogarth." A correspondent of The Athenæum now writes that this drawing was after a profile of Fielding "cut by a lady with a pair of scissors," the painter furnishing the expression from memory, and asks, "Could such a portrait be trustworthy, and what sort of full face is a sculptor going to get from a profile?"

* * *

M. PETIT, the chief organizer of the "corner" in Corots in Paris, has some fifty on his hands which he intends to sell this autumn. He is full of fear lest the Trouillebert affair should make a mess of his little speculation.

MONTEZUMA.



PICTURES IN THE AMSTERDAM EXPOSITION OF 1883.

1. "ARRIVAL OF RE-ENFORCEMENTS (SEPTEMBER, 1870)." BY E. MEDARD. 2. "THE FISHERS' RETURN." BY L. DILL. 3. "THE MESSENGER OF THE TEMPEST." BY C. LANDELLE. 4. "HAYDEE." BY Mlle. L. MERCIER. 5. "NORWEGIAN SHEPHERDESS." BY H. DAHL. 6. "ON THE WAY TO THE SABBAT." BY C. J. A. ESCUDIER. 7. "RABBIS." BY E. MOYSE. 8. "THE IRONWORKERS' STRIKE." BY P. SOVER.